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ABSTRACT

This report discusses the third major stage of the Queensland Board of Teacher Education's investigation into the nature of school experiences in preservice teacher education programs in Queensland, Australia. An account is presented of the proceedings of a statewide conference held in September 1984 to discuss results of the survey research project. This volume includes the following papers: (1) "Outline of Results of Board of Teacher Education Research Study" (Greg Duck and Debra Cunningham); (2) "Setting Priorities for Improving the Practicum" (Ken Eltis); and (3) "Discussion of Issues Arising Out of Group Recommendations" (Betty Watts). Sections of this volume also address a summary of recommendations arising from group discussions and recommendations of the Board of Teacher Education. (CB)

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SCHOOL EXPERIENCE IN QUEENSLAND PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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SCHOOL EXPERIENCE IN
QUEENSLAND PRE-SERVICE
TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

2. Conference Report

Board of Teacher Education, Queensland
P.O. Box 389, Toowong, Q. 4066.

March 1985

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PREFACE

The third major stage of the Board of Teacher Education's investigation of school experience in pre-service teacher education programs in Queensland was a statewide conference held in September 1984. This report presents an account of the proceedings of the conference. A report of the first two stages of the project, which involved a questionnaire survey and a number of seminars held at teacher education institutions throughout Queensland is available from the Board as a separate publication.

The conference was organised as a teleconference with one group meeting at the Bardon Professional Development Centre in Brisbane and smaller groups of participants meeting simultaneously in Toowoomba, Townsville and Rockhampton.

The contribution of the following to the organisation of the conference is gratefully acknowledged:

- . Dr Roy Lundin, Brisbane College of Advanced Education, for providing invaluable, expert advice on teleconferencing
- . Associate Professor Ken Eltis, Macquarie University, the keynote speaker
- . Emeritus Professor Betty Watts, the conference expositor
- . local organisers in the centres outside Brisbane - Ron Skilton, Toowoomba; Neal Sellars, Townsville; Lewis Larking, Rockhampton
- . production staff at Macquarie University and Brisbane College of Advanced Education for producing videotapes of the opening speakers
- . Justin Hughes and technical staff at the Bardon Professional Development Centre.

Planning for the conference was undertaken by the Research Committee of the Board of Teacher Education. This report was edited by Greg Duck and Debra Cunningham and typed by Jackie Sorensen.

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Teacher Education's school experience conference was held on Saturday, 1 September 1984.

The aim of the conference was to provide a forum for the sharing of ideas on school experience among different groups and among those involved in different programs and so lead to proposals for making school experience as meaningful as possible a part of a teacher's pre-service preparation for teaching.

To allow a large number of participants outside Brisbane to participate, the conference was organised as a teleconference format. Separate groups met in Brisbane, Townsville, Rockhampton and Toowoomba and were linked for some of the time by conference telephones. In all, 162 people participated in the conferences: 81 in Brisbane, 30 in Townsville, 32 in Rockhampton and 19 in Toowoomba. Participants included lecturers, supervising teachers, school principals, inspectors of schools, beginning teachers, student teachers and parents. A list of participants is given in Appendix 1. A copy of the Board's school experience research report was sent to participants as background reading.

The format of the conference was:

Session 1 Outline of results of research study.

Keynote address.

Questions by conference participants.

Videotapes of the presentation of the results of the research and of the keynote speech were prerecorded. These were played in the non-metropolitan centres while they were being delivered live in Brisbane. During the question period, all groups were linked via conference telephones.

Session 2 Small group discussion. At each centre, the conference divided into several small groups to discuss a number of issues identified from the Board's research. The issues were:

- collaboration between schools and tertiary institutions
- relationship between school experience and tertiary studies
- selection, preparation and role of supervising teachers
- selection, preparation and role of supervising lecturers
- evaluation of student teachers
- student experiences within schools.

Each group was asked to make recommendations in at least two of these areas. During this session there was some telephone interaction between groups in various centres.

Session 3 Participants involved with each program met separately to discuss any implications for their own program.

Session 4 A report of the small group discussions in Session 2 was provided to the conference expositor, Professor Betty Watts. During Session 4, which was a plenary session, Professor Watts commented on the major themes she saw running through the group reports. Following her remarks on each theme, comments were invited from conference participants. During this session, all centres were linked by conference telephone.

This report contains an outline of the findings of the research study and the keynote speech (Session 1) and an edited version of the discussion which took place during

Session 4. As well, a summary of the recommendations made by the groups during Session 2 is presented. This was compiled from a written record of each group's discussion.

The final section of the report contains a number of recommendations, endorsed by the Board of Teacher Education, and conclusions arising out of the research and conference.

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CONFERENCE SNAPSHOTS



*Dr Ken Eltis delivering
keynote speech*



Small group discussion



*Dr Bill Hall introduces
Professor Betty Watts*



Some informal discussion

OUTLINE OF RESULTS OF BOARD OF TEACHER EDUCATION RESEARCH STUDY

Greg Duck)
Debra Cunningham) Board of Teacher Education

What we intend to do is to very briefly outline the methodology we employed in the project and touch upon the key results.

Methodology

The first stage of the project was a questionnaire survey of final-year student teachers, supervising teachers, school co-ordinators of practice teaching and supervising lecturers. The items used in the questionnaire were based on preliminary interviews with a small number of each of these groups and on issues raised in previous investigations of school experience, particularly those undertaken in Queensland. Samples of the various groups were selected from those involved with each of the fourteen programs of primary and secondary pre-service preparation which were in operation in Queensland in 1982. Questionnaires were distributed in second semester 1982. In all, 1288 individuals responded to the questionnaire. The respondents were made up of 443 student teachers, 433 supervising teachers, 228 school co-ordinators and 184 teacher education lecturers. The overall response rate was 78 per cent.

During 1983, a separate report, based on the results of the questionnaire survey, was then compiled for each of the fourteen teacher education programs. These reports were discussed at seminars held in conjunction with the various teacher education institutions. The seminars were attended by tertiary lecturers, supervising teachers, school principals, student teachers and recent graduates. Some recommendations and suggestions specific to individual programs and some having wider implications emerged from these seminars, which were held from October to December 1983.

The full findings from the survey, together with a summary of the seminar discussion, are contained in the Research Report. Some of the interesting findings are discussed below.

1. *Relationship between school experience and tertiary studies*

One of the key areas which we looked at in the study was the relationship between school experience and tertiary studies. The Bassett Committee recommended that practice teaching should occupy a central position in pre-service teacher preparation courses and that all professional studies should be functionally related to it. However, previous research on school experience indicates that there is often no systematic connection between what happens at the tertiary institution and what happens when the students are in the schools.

In the Board of Teacher Education study, teachers, students and lecturers were asked about the extent of the relationship between lectures and school experience, whether there should be a more meaningful relationship, and if so, how it could be achieved.

On a four-point scale from great to not at all, most of the student teachers said that there was either a moderate or a little relationship between school experience and tertiary studies. The students said that the relationship was greatest for curriculum studies and least for foundation studies. The supervising teachers were a little more positive than the students about the relationship with more than half of the teachers reporting that it was evident to a moderate extent that student teachers used their campus learnings when they were in the school. Lecturers were the most positive of all the groups in their assessment of the relationship between school experience and

1.

tertiary lectures. Nearly all of the lecturers considered that school experience was focused on to either a great or a moderate extent during campus lectures. And the lecturers said that this was true both for the lectures which preceded school experience and for those which followed it.

Nonetheless, a very clear majority of lecturers, students and supervising teachers believed that there should be a more meaningful relationship between school experience and tertiary studies. Many suggestions for achieving a closer relationship were given. These included, firstly, making campus lectures more practically oriented and relevant to the school situation. A typical student comment which illustrates this point was:

there should be more lecturing about the realities of teaching and less about theories which prove to be ineffective.

Some supervising teachers commented that there should be more emphasis on syllabuses and background subject matter, and how to cope with various situations such as large classes, small groups and slow learners.

A second group of suggestions for fostering a more meaningful relationship between school experience and tertiary studies concerned the degree of lecturer involvement in schools generally and in school experience in particular. Many respondents, including some tertiary staff themselves, considered that lecturers were out of touch with the real school situation because they had not recently taught in schools. It was therefore suggested that lecturers should return to teach in schools every few years or that they should make frequent visits to schools so that they could see what was "really" being taught.

Thirdly, to achieve a strong and meaningful relationship between school experience and tertiary studies, it was also considered necessary for supervising teachers to be more involved in and familiar with the students' tertiary course. One means of achieving this, which was suggested by respondents to the questionnaire and by participants in the seminars, was for more use to be made of teachers as guest lecturers in the tertiary institution or as staff seconded to the institution. It was also suggested that school co-ordinators and supervising teachers could be invited to observe students' lectures in order to gain an appreciation of the content and processes involved in students' campus work.

Fourthly, improving the communication and collaboration between schools and tertiary institutions was seen as being important to achieving a more meaningful relationship between school experience and tertiary studies. For instance, it was felt, particularly by the students and teachers, that there should be more communication concerning the colleges' requirements of both student teachers and supervising teachers, more use of joint planning sessions in which both tertiary and school staff were involved, and more discussion between teachers and lecturers during school experience to consider students' progress.

2. *Communication and collaboration*

The issue of communication and collaboration between tertiary institutions and schools came up in answers to a number of other questionnaire items and in seminar discussions. Generally, it could be concluded that there was an expressed wish for better communication and collaboration between schools and teachers on the one hand and lecturers and tertiary institutions on the other.

For instance, supervising teachers said that they wanted more frequent consultation with tertiary staff concerning expectations for school experience, and in developing solutions to problems which students were experiencing. In an open-ended question asking teachers to list areas in which they wanted more assistance from tertiary institutions, the most common response was that they would like a clearer idea of what students and supervising teachers were expected to do in school experience.

Supervising teachers also felt that they had insufficient information about the students whom they were supervising. Teachers wanted to know about a student's prior school experiences, about the college courses he or she had undertaken, about his or her special strengths and interests, and in some cases, about a student's areas of weakness, although there was some concern expressed by both teachers and lecturers that providing information on a student's weaknesses might prejudice the student's assessment. Leaving this issue aside, it was generally agreed that the provision of information would be facilitated if students were to complete a pro-forma, which included the types of information just outlined, and forward it to their supervising teachers a week or so prior to the commencement of the practice.

The participation of school personnel in activities designed to plan school experience was low. For instance, 4 per cent of supervising teachers had been involved in planning of practice teaching handbooks and 7 per cent had been on advisory committees for planning the school experience. The proportion wanting to participate was much higher, but the teachers reported that they would need relief from their teaching duties in order to be able to spend time in these activities.

A suggestion raised at the seminars for increasing the level of teacher involvement in the teacher education process was to improve the effectiveness of the communication between teachers and their representatives on school experience committees. It was felt that the representatives should provide other supervising teachers with information on discussions which took place at committee meetings and should actively seek opinions of supervising teachers on issues which were to be discussed in committees.

These two areas, i.e. the relationship between school experience and tertiary studies, and communication and collaboration between schools and tertiary institutions, are critical ones in improving the practicum. We now turn briefly to some other areas identified in the research as being important in increasing the effectiveness of school experience.

3. *Selection, preparation and role of supervising teachers*

School co-ordinators reported three main bases for selecting supervising teachers: firstly, the teacher's willingness to supervise a student teacher; secondly, the teacher's teaching experience; and thirdly, his or her teaching ability. Most of the teachers said that they became supervising teachers because they were asked to by the school principal. In a number of cases, teachers said that they were given no option as to whether they took students and in a few instances, teachers reported being threatened with transfer if they did not accept a student teacher.

Concern was expressed by student teachers, supervising teachers themselves and tertiary staff that some teachers who were unsuited to the supervisory task were becoming supervisors. It was therefore felt that more careful screening of supervising teachers should be made and that criteria for effective supervision should be identified and communicated to those responsible for selecting supervising teachers.

At the same time, there was recognition that it was becoming increasingly difficult to attract good teachers into supervision. It was important therefore to provide encouragement for teachers to become supervisors. As well as monetary incentives, other incentives suggested were: providing supervising teachers with some relief from their normal teaching duties, having "supervising teacher" regarded as a career step for promotional purposes, giving official recognition to supervising teachers by appointing them as temporary lecturers or teacher education associates, and providing supervising teachers with credit towards and education degree, for instance, by including a unit on supervision in the Bachelor of Education degree. School principals, other supervising teachers, tertiary staff and school inspectors all were seen as having a role to play in encouraging teachers to become supervisors.

It was considered important that, once selected, supervising teachers should be

adequately prepared for their role. Time constraints made it difficult for supervising teachers to become involved in seminars, but it was generally felt that seminars held at schools had more chance of attracting teachers than those held at tertiary institutions.

As far as the role of the supervising teacher was concerned, it was agreed by both teachers and students that supervising teachers should provide more help to students in the area of long-term curriculum planning - for instance, showing how the particular unit which the student was teaching fitted into the teacher's overall program for the semester or year.

Student teachers valued those supervisors who were "helpful", "supportive", "reassuring" and "approachable and sympathetic". According to the students, good supervisors gave them freedom in planning and implementation of lessons in order to allow students to "experiment with as many methods of teaching as possible". Students valued the feedback which teachers gave them on their teaching. The teachers were, however, concerned that time constraints prevented them from spending adequate time in feedback sessions with student teachers. Suggestions were therefore made that periods of the timetable should be set aside for teachers and students to have discussions about the student's teaching.

At some of the school experience, it was suggested that there should be some form of evaluation of supervising teachers.

4. *Selection, preparation and role of lecturers*

At the school experience seminars, it was suggested that not all lecturers were suitable to be involved in the practicum and that therefore tertiary institutions might need to look at how to select those tertiary staff best suited to supervising student teachers. It was also suggested that institutions look at running courses aimed at preparing lecturers for their role during school experience.

Student teachers and supervising teachers valued the interest shown by lecturers in school experience and in schools generally. Those lecturers who showed a genuine interest in and commitment to schools tended to engender a similar level of commitment and interest in teachers and students.

However, according to students in particular, the amount of time which college and university staff spent in schools during school experience was completely inadequate.

One area in which lecturer involvement was regarded as being well below ideal was the teaching of demonstration lessons in schools. The teaching of isolated lessons was, however, not supported. Rather, value was seen in lecturers forming long-term working relationships with schools so that they could get to know the pupils and the teacher's program well and hence be better placed to teach demonstration lessons.

Another area of concern regarding the lecturer's role was in the area of assessment. Students felt that lecturers had a disproportionate influence on their assessment compared to the time which they spent observing students. Moreover, students felt that lessons which they gave when lecturers were present were "staged" and therefore did not give a true indication of the student's teaching ability.

Generally speaking, the lecturers also said that they wanted to spend more time in schools, but that there would need to be a reduction in their campus commitments during periods of school experience to allow this to happen.

A suggestion emerging from the school experience seminars was that some lecturers could be school-based, spending all of their time working in schools.

5. *Assessment of student teachers' school experience*

There seemed to be some confusion, particularly in the minds of student teachers, about exactly who was involved in their assessment and what processes were involved in arriving at their grading. In addition, the criteria used in assessing student teachers were not always adequately explained. There was also some concern expressed by students that the grade they obtained depended on the particular lecturer or particular teacher who happened to be supervising them.

Nonetheless, both school co-ordinators and lecturers reported that attempts were made to moderate ratings awarded both within and among schools. In most cases, moderation was undertaken informally through discussions between school co-ordinators, supervising teachers and supervising lecturers. In other cases, particular personnel, for example, principals or lecturers, were assigned the task of moderating grades.

As well as a final summative assessment, it was seen as essential that student teachers be provided with regular diagnostic feedback and that this feedback be provided at the appropriate time, i.e. fairly soon after the student's lesson. Lesson analysis sheets were seen as valuable means of providing this feedback. One suggestion was that more opportunities should be provided for peer evaluation of a student's teaching. To facilitate this, two student teachers might be allocated to the one supervising teacher.

6. *Student experiences within schools*

Included under this heading are findings relating to the timing and duration of school experience, the activities which student teachers undertake during school experience and the settings of school experience.

While it was generally agreed that it would be desirable to increase the total amount of time devoted to school experience, it was at the same time recognised that resource constraints made this virtually impossible. Nevertheless, it was felt that some restructuring of time could be made. In particular, it was suggested that more school experience could be scheduled for final year, with a reduction in the amount in earlier years. It was seen as important to schedule some block practice for the second semester of the final year. It was also thought desirable for block practice to be held at various times of the year so that students experienced the demands on teachers and schools at different times, rather than, for example, always being at the school during the examination period. Value was seen in students' visiting their practising schools prior to the block practice so that they could become familiar with the school, the teacher and the pupils.

With regard to the activities which students undertook during their school experience, there was support for broadening these. Students should be given opportunities to, and encouraged to, participate in such activities as parent-teacher interviews, school extra-curricular activities, school staff meetings, working with teacher aides and working with specialist teachers.

There was general support for the notion that students should have school experience in a variety of schools and classrooms and with a variety of pupils - for instance, in country schools, with pupils of varying socio-economic levels, in open-area classrooms, and in multi-grade situations. Ideally, students should also be exposed to teachers with a range of teaching styles.

SETTING PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVING THE PRACTICUM

Ken Eltis,
Macquarie University

1. INTRODUCTORY

The brief for this paper was to react to the Report *School Experience in Queensland Pre-Service Teacher Education Programs* (Board of Teacher Education, June 1984) and to seek to achieve a number of aims:

- to set the Board's research in a broader context by drawing upon experience elsewhere and on the relevant literature;
- to lead to proposals for making school experience as meaningful as possible a part of teacher preparation;
- to identify any matters to which the Board might give further consideration.

In pursuing these aims in my paper, I have drawn on three main sources:

- my experience as a member of the team engaged in the *Supervision Development Program* from 1979 to 1982;
- subsequent research and development with Professor Turney, from the University of Sydney, begun in late 1982 and still in train, the aim of which is to devise *A Practicum Curriculum: A New Basis for Teacher Education*;
- my own experiences for over a decade as co-ordinator of the School Experience component of the Teacher Education Program at Macquarie University in Sydney.

In the paper I shall concentrate rather on what might be done to improve current practices and not on merely cataloguing the various problems. This will involve me in discussing more than just organisational aspects of the practicum. Simply sending more letters to schools, issuing larger handbooks and making a greater number of telephone calls to remind people of what we want them to do will not improve matters much in the long run. I shall argue that we shall overcome the various practicum difficulties, which have now been very fully documented, only if we

- decide on what might be a desirable set of school experiences, i.e. a practicum curriculum in which all aspects of the student's program are closely inter-related;
- map out a carefully planned sequence of activities students should move through;
- determine how such activities should be supervised, with careful definition of the roles of all participants in the practicum;
- take steps to prepare participants for their various role responsibilities.

2. SPOTLIGHT ON THE PRACTICUM

We can be excused if we have a sense of *deja vu* when we read the latest Report from the Board of Teacher Education in Queensland (referred to throughout this paper as *QBTE Report*, 1984). It represents another phase of the interest in the practicum (or practice teaching, or field experience) which has been evident for some time in Australia (see e.g. Campbell, Evans, Philp and Levis, 1978; Hewitson, 1979; Skilton, 1979; Turney, 1977).

In the year 1980, interest in the practicum as an essential component of teacher education came to a peak. Remember the *National Inquiry into Teacher Education* (Auchmuty, 1980)? What did it have to say about the practicum? It argued the case for:

- closer collaboration between tertiary institutions and schools in planning, implementing and evaluating the practicum;
- a closer relationship between the practicum experiences and education theory taught in the institutions;
- purposeful, carefully designed practicum experiences (Auchmuty, 1980, Chapter 6).

Not only were *practicum experiences* the subject of detailed comment; the National Inquiry also stressed the crucial role of supervising teachers and emphasised the need for them to be "carefully selected" and "appropriately trained" for their work (p.127).

Recall, too, how the various State Inquiries into Teacher Education contained similar pleas after drawing attention to perennial problems. They also talked in terms of the need for the practicum to be a collaborative enterprise between tertiary institutions and schools and the need for teachers to be given support and training for their supervisory roles (see Asche, 1980; Bassett, 1978; Correy, 1980, p.196).

Let me hasten to say that the practicum story is not all bad. There have been improvements over the last decade. The days of the "sink or swim approach" appear to have gone. Practicum handbooks suggest there is greater attention being given to the needs and concerns of individual students, and institutions have attempted to provide earlier preliminary experiences in schools leading to longer periods of in-school teaching. There does appear to be a greater awareness of the need for closer interaction between teachers and teacher educators and an upgrading of the role of teacher supervisors.⁽¹⁾ All of these positive aspects are reflected, at least in part, in the Queensland Report. But there is certainly no room for complacency.

Despite our efforts and fervent pleas in the various State and National Reports, it has to be said that there are still considerable shortcomings in present practicum arrangements. Two years ago, in the first Report from the *Supervision Development Project*, we drew the following conclusion:

While many dedicated professionals working in the practicum have endeavoured to improve its operation, consideration of the quality of the student's practicum experience has been sadly neglected. The framing of objectives and the evaluation of student teaching have received considerable attention in the last few years, but the devising and sequencing of appropriate experiences, and the preparation of supervisors have been regarded almost as frills to the practicum exercise. Often the hope has been that some improvements might be made next time round. Unfortunately, in many institutions once practice teaching has been completed with student grades determined and reports filed the practicum has been forgotten in the turmoil of academic course commitments. By the time the next practice teaching period arrives it has been too late to do much about making improvements. Vitally important issues related to the purpose, quality and impact of the curriculum have been overlooked or only touched upon in this costly and time-consuming operation. (Turney et al, 1982a, p.12)⁽²⁾

In short, our work as part of the *Supervision Development Project* in the early 1980s revealed problems similar to those apparent in the recently completed Queensland study, and they relate strongly to twenty-one areas Hewitson (1979) listed as requiring attention if the practicum were to be improved. Rather than provide a catalogue of ills, I shall cite only some of the common areas:

- (1) When preparing a chapter highlighting exemplary practicum practices in Australia for the first Report of the Supervision Development Project, (Turney et al., 1982a) the project team became aware of the considerable efforts made by teacher educators to offer students a better quality program of school experience.
- (2) Incidentally, these comments were based on data gathered prior to the amalgamation exercise and the subsequent turmoil in many tertiary institutions - it can be assumed that the energies and resources which that exercise has demanded will have reduced even more the amount of time tertiary staff might have for thinking about improving the practicum.

- poor communications (Queensland Board of Teacher Education 1984, p.33);
- poor relationships between school experiences and theoretical studies (QBTE, p.95);
- need for more involvement of school personnel in planning experiences (QBTE, p.54);
- need for improved selection of teachers (QBTE, p.80, p.81, p.95);
- need for better placement procedures (QBTE, p.80, p.81);
- need for clearer ideas of role expectations (QBTE, p.88).

So, the problems we face with the practicum are not new, and they are not confined to Queensland! This is not to argue, however, that nothing can be done about them. Perhaps we have not used our heightened awareness and understanding of what the practicum involves and of the problems associated with its current operation to best advantage. It may be that we have been overwhelmed by the vast array of difficulties and have not concentrated our attention on a set of basic issues, clearly defined, which, if successfully pursued, would see a marked improvement in the practicum program students undertake.

There follows a set of six questions covering six interlocking aspects which, if successfully tackled, could lead to a thorough renovation of the practicum with positive outcomes for all involved.

1. How can we ensure in our pre-service programs that students will be adequately equipped to fulfil current and emerging teacher roles as they take their place in the profession? In particular, what are the implications of the experiences of beginning teachers for the pre-service practicum?
2. How can we broaden the range of experiences students undertake to equip them for more than just the classroom teacher role?
3. How can we devise a set of practicum experiences (both on and off campus) which are more systematically arranged, are more closely focused on individual needs and give students a phased introduction to teacher roles?
4. In devising our program, how can we overcome the implementation gap (i.e. the separation between intentions and implementation in the practicum), and the theory-practice dichotomy (i.e. the gap between the theoretical knowledge offered in the program and the practical experiences of the practicum)?
5. How can we increase the proportion of practicum time spent on productive, purposeful and carefully supervised experiences?
6. How can we help students to work confidently with pupils and not feel the need to be highly restrictive and unaccepting of their ideas or simply to adopt the style of the supervising teacher?

The order in which the questions are listed is important. It suggests that we need to sharpen our understanding of the various roles our graduates will be expected to play when they enter the profession. This heightened awareness should guide decisions concerning campus-based and in-school activities for students, and their related theoretical underpinnings. Having determined activities and their appropriate sequencing, we then need to direct our efforts at how to ensure the effective supervision of students completing programs. This will eventually raise the questions of who should supervise and what might be done to equip supervisors in schools and institutions for their role.

I would suggest, therefore, that we might spend our time more profitably if we examine as thoroughly as we can the nature of the practicum curriculum and its super-

vision before looking, yet again, at some of the perennial problems of school experience. So, in putting forward some suggestions for ways in which we might work to improve the practicum, I have begun with and concentrated on desirable practicum activities and aspects of the supervision process.

3. WORKING TO IMPROVE THE PRACTICUM

Establishing a Practicum Curriculum

In the Queensland Report on School Experience two significant problem areas are highlighted. The first relates to the inadequate links between what is done in the tertiary institutions and the practicum itself (QBTE, p.44 et seq.), and the second concerns the very limited range of activities students complete in schools, with the focus being almost exclusively on whole-class teaching (see QBTE, p.21 et seq.).

There is an urgent need to arrive at a carefully sequenced set of graduated activities designed to link theoretical considerations to practical tasks undertaken with pupils. As Smith (1980) has argued, "the skills of teaching cannot be acquired by formal courses in method, or by uncontrolled experiences in practice situations, or by any other means than those of systematic and progressive training" (p.85). At the same time, we need to enhance the quality of the practicum by ensuring that the experiences undertaken will prepare students for the various roles they will play as teachers, and these will go beyond just classroom-based activities (Joyce, 1980). To date, little has been done to prepare a detailed analysis of the many and varied roles teachers presently play and might play in the future, or of the ability of beginning teachers to cope with their roles when they enter the profession; nor have the implications of such an analysis for desirable pre-service practicum experiences been adequately explored.

There is presently in train in Sydney a research and development project designed to produce a practicum curriculum which will derive its content and experiences from an analysis of teacher roles. Roles are seen as general teaching behaviours which arise from the expectations that teacher educators, employing authorities, members of the teaching profession, parents and others have of teachers entering the profession.

We have come to the view that within the school context students should have a range of practicum experiences in three broad pedagogical domains in which teachers professionally operate:

- the classroom
- the school
- the school/community.

In the classroom, for example, student teachers have to be able to carry out a wide range of teaching tasks as part of instruction; within the school they may be asked to participate in school-based curriculum development, or say, to help devise and implement a school's multicultural policy; and within the community they may learn of the diverse backgrounds and expectations of parents of pupils in the classes. Of course, teachers must learn to work in other important domains, especially as employees of a school system and as members of the teaching profession. During their pre-service preparation, however, they will need to concentrate on the pedagogical domains of classroom, school and school/community.

It will be helpful to look at some of the roles we have isolated. We anticipate that in pre-service programs the major focus will continue to be the Classroom Domain and here, on the basis of our literature review and analysis of teacher roles, we are presently suggesting that seven roles need to be considered.

Teacher Roles in the Classroom Domain

Planning for Learning
Initiating and Guiding Learning
Fostering Inter-Personal Relationships
Facilitating Independent Learning
Managing the Learning Environment
Monitoring and Evaluating Performance
Pursuing Self-Improvement

Having analysed the roles in detail, we have been actively engaged in defining tasks which relate to each. For example, planning for learning involves:

- selecting and specifying objectives
- choosing content
- specifying instructional strategies and scheduling time
- deciding on resources
- determining assessment procedures.

With the delineation of tasks needed to satisfactorily play each role complete, we have considered how students might be introduced to the tasks related to each role:

- what pre-practicum activities should be undertaken
- how to ensure pre-practicum learning activities incorporate work done in as many areas as possible (e.g. curriculum, laboratory teaching, learning theory).

The ultimate aim is to make the practicum an integral part of the teacher education program, contributing to its aims and closely interrelated to learning in its various content areas.

We have paid considerable attention to the roles teachers play in the Community Domain as it is becoming increasingly obvious that in schools of today and tomorrow teachers will no longer be able to operate solely within the narrow confines of the classroom (see e.g. the recommendations in Swan and McKinnon, 1984). In the community domain we are presently offering four roles.

Teacher Roles in the Community Domain

Promoting Information Exchange
Opening the School and Class to Parents and Community
Sharing Resources Between School and Community
Involving Parents and Community in School and Class
Policy and Practice

The roles in this domain are particularly interesting. Our analysis of the tasks associated with each has pointed to a clear need for certain experiences to be completed in pre-service (e.g. in Role 1, reporting on pupil progress; gathering information and forming understanding about parents and children), while other tasks related to our roles will necessarily be pursued in detail in in-service programs (e.g. in Role 4, consulting on policy and practice; encouraging participation in decision-making on policy and practice). Thus our work could greatly assist in turning into reality the various pleas we have heard for the establishment of teacher education as a con-

tinuum, extending from pre-service through to induction and on-going in-service activities.

It can be very strongly argued that there is an urgent need for the professional and academic studies components of teacher education programs to be revised and repackaged, so that present and prospective teacher roles, rather than the content structure of disciplines, become the basis for selection and organisation of course material. With careful course planning, theoretical studies might then be organised and taught in such a way as to illuminate practical situations instead of the other way around (Smith, 1969). When our work on the role and task analyses is complete, it will be possible to develop modules for students to work through, in which academic studies in education, curriculum and professional studies and field experience are all linked, with the latter having a central place and not being on the periphery of the program.

Improving Supervision

It has often been stated that effective supervision is the key to the effectiveness of the practicum (e.g. Hewitson, 1979). Turney et al. (1982b) put it this way: "If, as the research indicates, practice teaching is the single most powerful intervention in a teacher's professional preparation, then supervision is the single most powerful process in such intervention" (p.2).

A major outcome of the *Supervision Development Project* was the production of a set of training materials designed for use with those asked to supervise other teachers (either student teachers or peers). Our aim in the Project was to define what happens in the supervision process, what roles supervisors have to play and what skills supervisors need to develop to play these roles successfully. We acknowledged the importance of "clinical" supervision as a powerful force in improving instruction (Krajewski, 1984). The following discussion draws on materials developed for the *Supervisor Development Programs: Role Handbook* (Turney et al., 1982b).

As a result of our analyses, it was possible to delineate six overlapping and interlocking roles played by supervisors in their relationships with student teachers. An effective supervisor whether from the school or the tertiary institution, must be conscious of the need to:

- be a good manager of resources (human, physical and time);
- use counselling skills with sensitivity, being mindful of the student's feelings and attitudes;
- give instruction on teaching skills;
- observe and analyse classroom teaching;
- provide feedback on classroom teaching;
- evaluate the quality of the student's teaching.

(The roles and their definition are set out in Appendix A.)

While it is important to understand how complex the supervisor's task is, it is no less so to understand the purpose of supervision and the resulting implications for the way supervisors will work with their students. The ultimate task of the supervisor is to encourage self-sufficiency and to develop in students the capacity for autonomous functioning. If students do not achieve a high degree of professional autonomy by the end of their training, then there must be doubts about their ability to function effectively in schools when they take up a teaching position.

A key factor in the supervisory process is the kind of relationship established between supervisors and their student teachers. Essential for the development of this relationship is a positive attitude to supervision on the part of the supervisor, along with a commitment to helping student teachers. A second variable which greatly affects the kind of relationships which might be established is the style adopted by the supervisor.

Over the last 15-20 years, research has been conducted into the influence of direct and indirect supervisor behaviours on student teachers (see Blumberg and Amidon, 1965; Sanders and Merritt, 1974). (Perhaps writers would be better to use the term non-directive rather than direct, but I shall use the term commonly employed.) These behaviours can be represented on a continuum (with no scale implied) as shown in Figure 1.

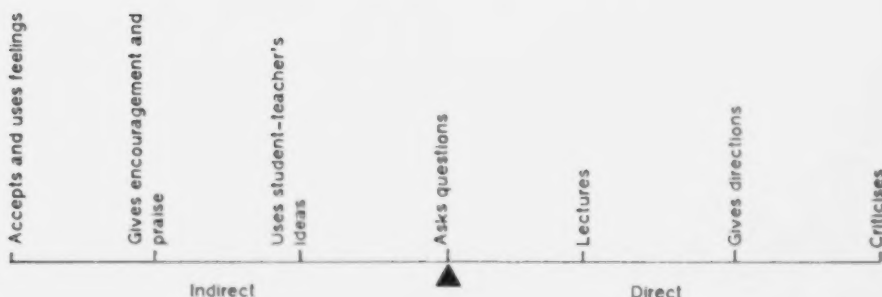


Figure 1: Supervisor Behaviours
(after Acheson and Goll, 1980, p.69)

In general terms, research has shown that supervisory styles which emphasise indirectness result in an atmosphere where there is a greater willingness to share ideas about teaching and ways of modifying behaviour. The evidence suggests that students prefer and ultimately benefit from increasing application of indirect behaviours.

It appears that, if we want to encourage our students to think critically about their own teaching, and by the end of their program to have developed the capacity for self-supervision, then it is important that a supervisory style be adopted which will further in students self-criticism and the development of self-awareness. Techniques which should feature, then, in the behaviour of supervising teachers are:

- listening
- acknowledging
- clarifying
- encouraging
- guiding (rather than constantly directing)
- letting the student analyse and interpret
- supporting
- responding to feelings.

Finally, there is also a need for a systematic approach to be adopted when observing the student teacher's classroom teaching and talking about it, so that whatever time is available is put to maximum use.

When training materials for the *Supervisor Development Programs* were being written, considerable time was devoted to the supervision cycle. Briefly, we have argued that, just as planning is needed before a lesson is taught, so too is planning needed for

supervision of lessons taught. Set out below (see Figure 2) is a model we developed to illustrate stages in the supervision and teaching cycle.

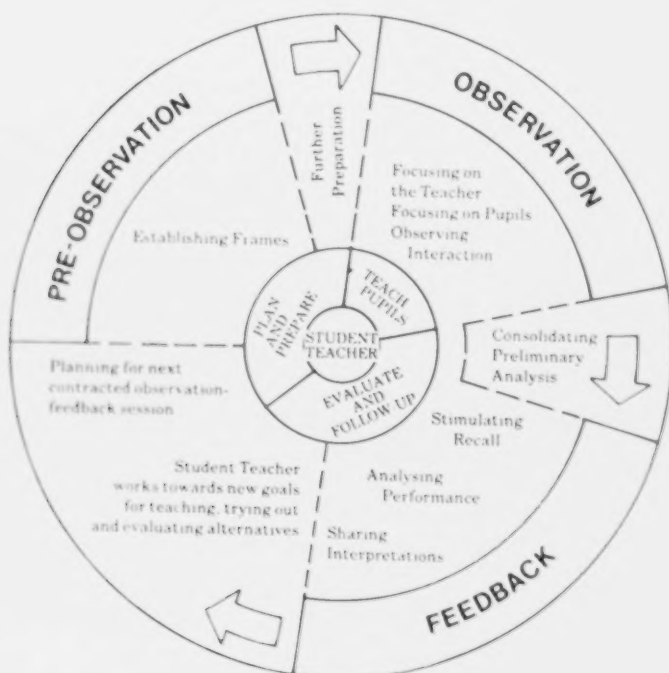


Figure 2: The Supervision Cycle
(Turney, et al., 1982b, p.121)

It should be noted that both the student teacher and the supervising teacher are asked to prepare themselves both before and after lesson observation. In following the steps in the cycle, the intention is that supervisors should use a blending of indirect and direct behaviours, attempting to increase over time the ratio of the former to the latter, so that the student teacher gradually develops the ability to be purposefully self-critical.

Making Effective Use of Time

The suggestions put forward in the two areas considered so far, designing a practicum curriculum and improving supervision, are intended to make the total teacher education program (not forgetting the practicum) more time efficient.

One might wonder why it is that, if there are so many problems associated with the practicum, students still consider it to be the most valuable part of their teacher education program (Collins, 1982; Damm, 1979). (Is the rest of their program so poor by comparison?) Indeed, they feel they derive so much benefit from the practicum that they argue for more time to be made available to it (see e.g. Correy, 1980; also QBTE Report, 1984).

Underpinning the suggestions which have been made for improving the practicum is the view that "more is not necessarily better", particularly if it is more of the same (see

Young, 1978). Our aim should be to make better use of the time we have at our disposal rather than to simply increase the quota of time we presently have. It has already been suggested that we should help students to derive maximum benefit from practicum experiences by ensuring that their pre-practicum program adequately prepares them for their work in schools and that this work should then be followed up in suitable post-practicum activities. Further, the pre- and post-practicum activities should integrate work from as many components of the program as possible. In our attempts to make more efficient use of time we should also see to it that we define optimum arrangements for school experience activities, taking into account whether the practicum is a first or final phase for students, whether it is a program of continuous contact or one block session. We also need to make sure that we clarify for all participants our objectives for particular practicum experiences.

Establishing "Ownership" of the Practicum

While the practicum might be seen as an integral part of the teacher education program, contributing to the achievement of its aims and closely related to its components, its actual operation takes place largely in the context of school programs where, often, teachers see their involvement in it as of secondary importance (Turney et al., 1982a). There is in this operation of the practicum in the dual contexts of school programs and institution program the potential for considerable tension. The institution thinks out policies, plans and philosophies; for their successful development and implementation it seeks a vital contribution from the professionals in the schools. The degree of success of the practicum is dependent upon the level of support and understanding generated between personnel in schools and teacher education institutions. There is a clear need to forge much closer campus-school bonds by promoting the acceptance of corporate planning and corporate responsibility (Hewitson, 1979).

To bring institutions and schools closer together and thereby establish "joint ownership" of the practicum a number of organisational measures have been taken by various institutions in Australia. One such measure has been the establishment in the institution of a broadly-based policy development committee which has on it representatives from co-operating schools and the tertiary institution (including students). As Skilton (1979) has pointed out, one way to raise the commitment of supervising teachers is to involve them (and not just their principals) directly in the determination of objectives, structures and procedures of any proposed practicum program. By having representatives from schools and the tertiary institutions present, it is possible for each to come to an appreciation of what the other can offer to the joint enterprise. It is essential that the climate of such committees be one in which openness, warmth and friendliness predominate. As an example, a broadly constituted committee could consider the question of whether practice teaching should be organised on a block or continuous contact basis. Perhaps the question will not be seen as an either/or option (as it appears to have been in the QBTE Report - see p.14 et seq.), but after considering the possibilities from all points of view, arrangements might be made to blend continuous and block sequences to enhance the student's experiences.

A further measure has been the establishment within individual schools of a practicum committee which accepts "ownership" of the program within a school. Membership of the committee might include tertiary lecturers linked to the school, members of the school hierarchy, supervising teachers and student teachers. The committee can offer support to supervising teachers and students and ensures that the school sees it has a significant role to play in the professional development of teachers.

Selecting Supervisors

School-based committees could play a very helpful role in the recruitment of suitable supervising teachers and, subsequently, with student placements. This is an area requiring considerable attention (see QBTE Report, pp.80, 81). While student teachers have suggested a number of desirable qualities supervising teachers should possess (they are "helpful", "supportive", "reassuring", "approachable", "sympathetic", offer "encouragement" and treat students more as "colleagues" - see Report, p.33), little

appears to be done to select those teachers likely to be successful as supervisors of students (see QBTE Report, p.80 et seq.).

It would seem desirable that certain basic criteria be established for appointing supervising teachers, e.g. three years' teaching experience, a recommendation from the school principal and/or head of a department, plus a willingness to be involved in activities designed to improve supervision skills. (Certainly, the practice of teachers not having the option to reject a student should be discontinued.) It would also be appropriate to ask supervising teachers to enter into some form of contract with their tertiary employer so that their additional responsibilities are formally acknowledged. It is important that prospective supervisors be prepared to undergo training in the role of supervisor (Copeland, 1977). This implies that those responsible for the program will arrange for such training to take place. Indeed, the argument has been put that more responsibility for pre-service supervision should be passed to supervising teachers because of their constant direct contacts with student teachers, and that a more appropriate role for tertiary staff is to train co-operating teachers for their supervisory roles and then to fulfil a liaison, consultancy function (Cohn, 1981).

Fostering Commitment

The more direct integration of teachers' contributions into the practicum can be pursued in other ways and lead to enhanced commitment. The Queensland Report indicates that involvement by teachers in various activities relating to the practicum (e.g. working on committees, attending seminars) was low (see p.54), but a significant proportion of the teachers suggested they would like more involvement, especially in seminars or meetings for supervising teachers either at school or at the tertiary institution. This positive response should be capitalised on.

Regular seminars are essential to the success of a school experience program (Eltis, 1977). Their purpose should be twofold: to foster collaboration amongst all involved in the practicum (lecturers, supervising teachers and student teachers) and to assist teachers in their role as practicum supervisors. If we are to be successful in gaining a positive commitment to the practicum and offer students high quality supervision, all participants must understand the purpose and organisation of the program in which they are going to work, the background of the students, and the demands to be made on each participant. To rely on handbooks or other printed material, however well presented and well received (see QBTE Report, p.57), clearly is not sufficient to ensure that teachers and tertiary supervisors are fully aware of their individual responsibilities (see QBTE Report, p.88).

4. DEVELOPING PRINCIPLES TO UNDERPIN THE PRACTICUM AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

A case has been made for the development of a practicum curriculum which should consist of a carefully sequenced set of purposeful, specific and feasible experiences based on a sound analysis of teachers' present roles and likely future ones. It is the responsibility of the teacher education program to conduct its own analysis and to arrive at a sequence of selected learning experiences which, over the time available, would integrate field experience and institution-based learning and adequately prepare student teachers to accept more and more responsibility for decisions which affect their work in schools.

Planning the implementation of a practicum curriculum will need to take place at two levels. At a broader level, it will be necessary to produce a flexible framework of principles or guidelines within which various experiences are developed. The major responsibility for this aspect of planning clearly rests with staff of the tertiary institution. At the same time, planning the curriculum will also involve selecting, adapting and organising specific experiences of the practicum curriculum to be implemented in the school context. At this level, planning should necessarily involve experienced co-operating teachers who know the school context, tertiary staff who know the institutional framework, and student teachers who have specific needs and interests to be met.

The principles set out below are a starting point. They are a set of broad, yet basic considerations derived from literature on the practicum (e.g. Althof, 1979; Davis, 1982; Smith, 1980) and also from our study of the practicum in Australia (Turney et al., 1982a).

Suggested Principles

1. Practicum experiences should form the core of the teacher education program and should serve to give students the opportunity both to put theory into practice and to illuminate practice with theory. Thus, practicum experiences should be closely integrated with all other aspects of the total teacher education program.
2. Practicum activities should be carefully phased and sequenced so that students move through a program extending from
 - simple to complex tasks,
 - working with individual pupils, to small group, to full classes,
 - a narrow range of tasks to a full range of teaching roles.
3. The practicum curriculum should give students an opportunity for responsible participation in all of the important domains of the teacher's work in and out of school. Thus physical facilities and on-going activities should be adequate to provide a range of first-hand experiences with pupils and adults in the contexts of class, school and school/community.
4. In providing the range of experiences undertaken by students, planning should recognise the need for continuity of experiences in pre- and in-service programs.
5. Practicum curriculum experiences should be problem- or task-oriented and not just subject-centred. As well, they should be structured to ensure an appropriate continuum of personal support for the development of basic skills and conceptual processes. Thus, the stress should be on the development both of ideas and competencies.
6. Practicum curriculum experiences should be planned according to a sequence which begins with observation and then proceeds through diagnosis, planning, implementation, and finally, evaluation.
7. Practicum curriculum experiences should, as far as possible, recognise individual differences among students in their point of beginning the experiences, in the nature of the experiences themselves, in their sequence, and in the length of time of continuing each experience. That is, the nature and extent of practicum curriculum experiences should be planned in terms of the needs and abilities of individual students.
8. While the structure of practicum curriculum experiences should be flexible enough to meet individual needs, it should be specific in terms of task requirements.
9. Practicum experiences should be carefully guided and supervised through the co-operative effort of school and tertiary staff. An appropriate mechanism for effective supervision is the cycle of clinical supervision.
10. Institutions should recognise the need to develop training programs and supervisors at all levels should be required to participate in such programs to develop their supervisory skills.
11. Responsibilities in practicum curriculum experiences should vary in their complexity according to the student's developmental advancement, both in the

formal curriculum and in experiences of the school. Students should gradually assume responsibility for decisions affecting experiences forming part of the practicum curriculum and, most importantly, for assisting in the evaluation of what is achieved.

12. Development and implementation of practicum curriculum experiences should take place in an atmosphere of collegial co-operation.
13. As consultation, negotiation and information come to develop their own principles to guide their practices and those of schools, wide consultation should occur with all appropriate groups. The need is also stressed for arriving at a comprehensive set of coherent principles. Arriving at only a limited number of underpinning principles may not produce a renovation of present practicum arrangements sufficient to eradicate major deficiencies.

5. CONCLUSION

In this paper, it has not been possible to cover all of the areas of the practicum which might need attention as part of a process of renovation. For example, not explicitly dealt with have been matters relating to evaluation of student teaching or the desirability of giving students experience in a range of schools.

What has been suggested is that the problems of the practicum are not new. The challenge is still with us to provide teacher education programs which bring together schools and institutions in the common task of producing teachers with a desire to be life-long learners themselves (Cropley, 1981). We cannot hope to equip student teachers with all of the knowledge and skills they will require to be effective teachers until the year 2025 (when many of our shortly to emerge graduates may still be in the profession).

What we should be striving for is a teacher imbued with a sense of "extended" professionalism (Hoyle, 1980). Such teachers will be concerned with locating their classroom teaching in a broader educational context, will not be averse to sharing their work with other teachers and will be interested in current theory and educational developments. They will "see teaching as a rational activity amenable to improvement on the bases of research and development" (Hoyle, 1980, p.49). If we can establish the practicum as a central component of our total program of teacher education and ensure that it is supervised by teachers who themselves have a sense of "extended" professionalism and willingly accept the need for joint involvement in preparing future teachers for our schools, we shall have made a significant contribution to the professional development of teachers in this country.

APPENDIX A

Six Roles Played by Supervisors and Related Skills (Turney et al., 1982b)

Supervisors are seen as playing six major roles in their work with students:

- manager
- instructor
- counsellor
- observer
- provider of feedback
- evaluator.

There follows a definition of each and an outline of the skills associated with each.

	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Skills Clustering in the Role</u>
<u>Manager:</u>	Refers to the planning, organising, monitoring and smooth operation of the practicum in line with its objectives.	Planning, Organising, Liaising, Motivating Participants.
<u>Counsellor:</u>	Behaviours through which supervisors comes to understand students' needs motivations, problems, strengths and through which supervisors help, guide, support students in meeting needs, pursuing motivation, overcoming problems and realising potential.	Relating, Responding, Helping, Handling Difficulties.
<u>Instructor:</u>	Giving student understanding, knowledge, skills designed to improve their teaching.	Presenting, Questioning, Problem Solving, Conferencing.
<u>Observer:</u>	Watching and listening to the student in the classroom and recording observations - making sense of the data observed and then determining what issues should be explored with students with what goals in mind.	Accurate observing and recording of teacher behaviour; selecting compiling and using appropriate observational instruments.
<u>Provider of Feedback:</u>	Conveying information to the students about their teaching as accurately, and realistically and positively as possible to help the students improve.	Giving precise information in a variety of forms from observational data, identifying students' behaviours to be changed or maintained, determining with student alternative strategies.

	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Skills Clustering in the Role</u>
<u>Evaluator:</u>	The gathering of data about - the quality of students' performance in the practicum and implications for follow-up or course progression or course completion - the success of the practicum and its supervision.	Accumulatively collecting and interpreting data on student performance, critically using rating scales, writing reports, making sound and balanced judgements, offering suggestions for improving performance.

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING OUT OF GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The following is a compilation of recommendations arising from the small-group discussions in session 4 of the teleconference.

The recommendations are set out under headings corresponding to the issues listed for this session in the conference booklet, viz.:

1. Collaboration between schools and tertiary institutions
2. Relationship between school experience and tertiary studies
3. Selection, preparation and role of supervising teachers
4. Selection, preparation and role of teacher education lecturers
5. Evaluation of student teachers
6. Student experiences within schools.

The sub-headings used below correspond roughly to the questions listed under each issue in the booklet, but some combining and dividing of questions has been carried out.

While the following compilation gives no indication of representativeness of the recommendations, it is interesting to note the number of groups addressing each issue:

ISSUE	NUMBER OF GROUPS	BRISBANE	TOOWOOMBA	ROCKHAMPTON	TOWNSVILLE
1	7	3	1	2	1
2	5	1	1	2	1
3	8	3	1	2	2
4	8	3	1	2	2
5	5	2	1	1	1
6	6	3	-	1	2

Several of the individual recommendations given below represent combinations of the actual recommendations made by the groups, while, in other cases, a listed recommendation was made by only one group.

Issue 1: Collaboration between schools and tertiary institutions

- (a) For school personnel to be more meaningfully involved with college and university staff in planning school experience programs, it was recommended -
- . that school personnel be provided with release time for such involvement
 - . that schools be given the option to use some of their pupil-free days for practicum purposes
 - . that schools develop practicum committees, with representation from supervising teachers, school administration, lecturers, student teachers, beginning teachers
 - . that school personnel be involved at an early stage (e.g. at least one month before the practicum begins) in meetings with the lecturers and student teachers at which expectations and responsibilities for the practice (including details such as teaching techniques to be used, and content areas to be taught) are discussed. Planning of school experience

could occur in stages, for example along the following lines: (i) supervising teachers and lecturers meet at the tertiary institution, (ii) supervising teachers, lecturers and student teachers meet at the school prior to the practice, and (iii) all meet at the school after the practice for follow-up and evaluation

that there be much more open communication and sharing of responsibility between lecturers and supervising teachers. Face-to-face contact between school and college or university personnel should be increased and made more systematic, but written information (from both the school and the tertiary institution) should be used where personal interaction is not appropriate.

- (b) Regarding the extent to which school personnel should be involved in the planning and implementation of pre-service teacher education courses, it was recommended:

that school personnel be involved in the design of the practicum at the time of review of programs and as an ongoing process, by, for example, holding workshops involving a large cross-section of school personnel, interviewing teachers about ideas for courses, inviting submissions from teachers on course structure, using feedback from practicum co-ordinating committees, and seconding school staff to tertiary institutions.

- (c) In order to maximise opportunities for college and university lecturers to keep themselves informed of current school practices, it was recommended:

- that more in-service activities for teachers be provided in tertiary institutions
- that existing means of involvement and communication, such as membership of course advisory committees, appointment of teachers as visiting lecturers, lecturers' teaching of classes in schools, and feedback from student teachers, be systematised
- that lecturers' timetables be organised so as to allow them more time for involvement in schools
- that lecturers be associated with one school and get to know it well
- that formal arrangements be made for lecturers to have contact with schools on a regular basis.

- (d) So that interaction among lecturers, teachers and student teachers can help to resolve problems encountered during school experience, it was recommended:

- that there be more contact and consultation among lecturers, teachers and student teachers
- that lecturers and teachers be trained in interpersonal communication so that this interaction can be carried out in a positive counselling framework in which discussion is open, purposeful and planned
- that problems be confronted before they reach crisis point
- that efforts be made to reduce or overcome physical and time constraints on this interaction.

- (e) In addition to the responses to the above questions, one group made a number of more general, long-term recommendations:

- that ways be found to enhance the status of practice teaching
- that the area of school experience be thoroughly researched, e.g. as to what school experience achieves

- that employing authorities and the government be pressured to increase the adequacy of human and material resources given to school experience (more communication with parents on the problems and needs could help with this)
- that clear criteria and goals be established, based on evidence, for the roles of teachers, lecturers and student teachers
- that time and structures be provided for the proper implementation and assessment of any changes made
- that consideration be given to the question of whether it would be better to use the money currently paid to supervising teachers to provide support to schools (e.g. supply teachers to reduce supervising teachers' loads).

Issue 2: Relationship between school experience and tertiary studies

In order to achieve a more meaningful relationship between school experience and tertiary studies, it was recommended:

- that team teaching be instituted on campus, with school teachers and lecturers working together with student teachers
- that significantly more of the formal course time at tertiary institutions be given to planning and reviewing the activities and experience of the practicum
- that learning experiences in tertiary institutions be made to reflect those of classrooms
- that student teacher assignments include preparation and evaluation of units of work and curriculum materials which student teachers will use in the school
- that there be no assignments to be undertaken during practice periods unless they are directly related to the day-to-day teaching
- that there be more discussion between lecturers and students
- that tertiary institutions' staffing policies be altered to place greater value on the practicum
- that tertiary lecturers involved in teacher education have their teaching competence evaluated
- that tertiary staff involved in teacher education be required to participate in regular school experiences
- that there be induction programs for supervising teachers and for lecturers to prepare them
- that students' class allocation be known in advance
- that more time be spent identifying the skills, content and strategies covered at each stage in the tertiary studies so that teachers can plan relevant experiences
- that work on campus and in schools be shared to develop strategies and materials to support development in teaching and learning
- that teachers be provided with regular feedback after practicum sessions
- that lecturers be invited to share in professional meetings and workshops in the teaching community
- that there be more meetings between the groups of people involved before, during and after the practicum
- that the role of school experience co-ordinator be upgraded (e.g. to include provision of the induction program for teachers, supply of information to supervisors, and meetings with tertiary co-ordinators of school experience)

- that the Board of Teacher Education take, or recommend to the appropriate bodies, that action be taken to overcome the financial and staffing barriers to the further development of relationships between schools and tertiary institutions
- that the Board support a larger circle of collaboration to foster this development
- that the Board indicate material support for proposals by local school-tertiary institution communities.

Issue 3: Selection, preparation and role of supervising teachers

- (a) In order to encourage more good teachers to become supervising teachers, it was recommended:
- that both schools and teacher education institutions be encouraged to see the practicum as part of their normal activities instead of as something peripheral
 - that the school experience program be promoted both from the college and within the school
 - that the advantages of teacher participation in the practicum be promoted - e.g. the chance to make known one's own expertise, and to share with lecturers one's own ideas on teaching
 - that potential supervising teachers be approached by the school administration to seek their co-operation
 - that there be more systematic and realistic induction of supervising teachers to enhance their self-confidence and their status
 - that supervising teachers be imbued with enough self-confidence to become more professionally autonomous in performing this role, especially as regards the provision of supervision beyond the classroom context
 - that good teachers meet to discuss aspects of the practicum, e.g. how to manage their duties and how to relate to students
 - that school co-ordinators of teaching practice be carefully selected since their role is extremely important to the success of the practicum.
- (b) Regarding incentives to be offered to supervising teachers, it was recommended:
- that supervising teachers be given more formal recognition, perhaps by being designated "associate lecturers" of the tertiary institution
 - that there be instituted promotional positions such as "master teacher" attainable specifically through supervising, e.g. by being a successful supervising teacher for several years
 - that schools with student teachers be given extra pupil-free days
 - that supervising teachers be given release time, e.g. by having their extra-curricular duties reduced
 - that the supervision workload of each supervising teacher be limited to a certain number of weeks per year
 - that the position of supervising teacher be made available on a contract or yearly basis
 - that supervising teachers be compensated by being given smaller classes
 - that academic units on supervision be provided within the Bachelor of Education programs, e.g. "Management of Student Teachers"
 - that supervising teachers be given access to pertinent units of Bachelor of Education courses on an informal or continuing education basis.

- (c) As to procedures to be used in selecting supervising teachers, it was recommended:
- . that selection be undertaken by a committee or panel consisting of:
 - the teachers' peers
 - the principal or department head, other senior teachers and a member of the tertiary institution
 (the above alternatives were suggested by different groups)
 - . that the school principal and the college decide who are to be supervising teachers, with the principal having the final say
 - . that the college set up the guidelines and take ultimate responsibility, but with much consultation with the school-based practicum committee.
- (d) Considering the criteria to be used in selecting supervising teachers, it was recommended:
- . that a school-based practicum committee be formed, comprising lecturer, school principal or co-ordinator, supervising teachers and student teachers, with one of its duties being interpretation of college criteria for selection of supervising teachers
 - . that the criteria be identified by teachers themselves, the administration, and student teachers
 - . that the selection criteria include willingness to supervise, classroom management skills, teaching effectiveness, ability to communicate with young people, commitment to the program, formal training in supervision and interest in personal or professional development
 - . that the criteria include performance in the six supervisory roles listed by Eltis in the keynote speech (viz. manager, instructor, counsellor, observer, provider of feedback, evaluator)
 - . that it be recognised that the excellent teacher is not necessarily the best teacher to supervise students.
- (e) Regarding action to ensure that supervising teachers and school personnel are able to share the criteria for effective supervision, it was recommended:
- . that there be more training of supervising teachers in in-service seminars
 - . that a school-based practicum committee be set up, comprising lecturer, principal/co-ordinator, supervising teachers and student teachers, with the following duties:
 1. definition of roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the practicum
 2. documentation of roles
 3. interpretation of college criteria for selection of supervising teachers
 4. provision of assistance to supervising teachers
 5. co-ordination of supervision procedures and evaluation
 and with representation on the overall school experience committee
 - . that a member of the tertiary institution be involved in schools on a regular basis
 - . that lecturers make more frequent visits to schools to keep up with the latest developments
 - . that a policy on supervision be formulated within each school
 - . that evaluation of teachers and lecturers by students be considered both by schools and by teacher education institutions

- that practicum roles be communicated through handbooks, seminars and so forth in order to develop a more unified conception of the roles among the different persons involved
 - that meetings be held within the school of all supervising teachers and lecturers at least once in each block to reflect on the collective experience of supervising in that block and that similar meetings be held outside the school with representatives of the various schools and the tertiary institution.
- (f) To ensure that supervising teachers are adequately prepared for their role, it was recommended:
- that the tasks of supervising teachers be clearly outlined
 - that there be adequate co-ordination and communication among supervising teachers, school administration and lecturers
 - that seminars be conducted in which the supervising role is discussed, interpreted and communicated, and that teachers be given release time to attend seminars
 - that in-service activities for supervisor preparation be school-based, e.g. conducted by a school-based supervisors' committee
 - that a Bachelor of Education subject on supervision be offered, and that it be available not only to those undertaking the whole Bachelor of Education program.

Issue 4: Selection, preparation and role of teacher education lecturers

- (a) To ensure that the time spent by lecturers in schools is maximised and that this time is as meaningfully spent as possible, it was recommended:
- that there be more meetings during the practice among the teacher, lecturer and student to discuss progress, e.g. by making at least one such meeting in each practice block compulsory; by providing a person to look after the class while the teacher, lecturer and student discuss the student's lesson immediately after the lesson; by lecturers' being available at the school on particular days for consultation
 - that the number of students for whom each lecturer is responsible be reduced
 - that each lecturer's responsibilities be concentrated into a small number of schools
 - that lecturers be given the opportunity to base themselves in schools during the school experience period
 - that lecturers have one day per week in their timetable to spend in schools for meetings and other activities associated with school experience
 - that the role of lecturers in the practicum be recognised by enhancing its status and giving it an appropriate time allowance
 - that school supervision committees be established as a means of facilitating liaison between lecturers and supervising teachers
 - that lecturers be involved in in-service seminars, in-school seminars and meetings of school supervisors' committees
 - that a regional liaison officer or co-ordinator of teaching practice be appointed, at class I principal level, to liaise between the tertiary institution and all schools and to share overall supervision of the practicum with the college supervisor of field studies
 - that provision be made to change supervisors in the case of personality clashes

- that provision be made for lecturers to visit country schools.
- (b) To prepare lecturers for their role in school experience, it was recommended:
- that supervision seminars be conducted within the tertiary institution
 - that induction courses be conducted for lecturers new to practicum supervision
 - that it be compulsory for lecturers who supervise in the practicum to have been previously involved in the classroom
 - that lecturers without classroom experience be attached to an experienced lecturer and work with the school-based practicum committee.
- (c) Concerning the formation of long-term working relationships with particular schools by lecturers, it was recommended:
- that lecturers be appointed at the beginning of a school year as part of the school staff (e.g. as "associate teachers")
 - that lecturers (both moderators and visiting lecturers) be encouraged to form long-term working relationships with schools, e.g. an attachment to a school on a three-year rotational basis
 - that visiting lecturers be provided with the time and resources necessary to enable them to develop long-term relationships with schools
 - that lecturers be released full-time for involvement in the practicum, e.g. as "resident lecturers" at schools.
- (d) In terms of alternative roles for lecturers during school experience, it was recommended:
- that observation of lessons by lecturers be replaced by their involvement in the planning process and in post-lesson reflection
 - that the following alternative roles be considered:
 1. lecturer is school-based and teaches one or two classes as well as taking on a liaison role
 2. lecturer performs only a moderation role
 3. lecturers' involvement with students be minimised while that with supervising teachers is maximised
 - that lecturers relinquish some of their reporting and assessing duties in order to "train" and consult with supervising teachers
 - that lecturers endeavour to structure the practicum so as to expose students to as wide a range of teaching role models as possible in order to provide maximum choice in developing their own teaching philosophies and styles
 - that there be more one-day seminars providing an overview of the practicum.

Issue 5: Evaluation of student teachers

- (a) Regarding the need to clarify the roles of school and tertiary personnel in the assessment of student teacher performance within schools, it was recommended:
- that in-service sessions for supervising teachers be conducted at the tertiary institution
 - that the school-based practicum committee meet with the lecturer to clarify school goals in relation to assessment procedures
 - that the role of the supervising teacher in the secondary school practicum be clarified

- that the roles of supervising teachers and tertiary institutions be clarified, with teachers assuming more responsibility for assessment.
- (b) To make students aware of the assessment processes and criteria, it was recommended:
 - that the school co-ordinator of the practicum present to the students the school-based practicum committee's guidelines
 - that the assessment be discussed with the lecturer, supervising teacher and student all present and with students having the opportunity to comment.
- (c) Regarding the moderation of grades awarded to student teachers, it was recommended:
 - that grades be moderated internally by supervising teachers
 - that supervising teachers in a school have the opportunity to observe all student teachers in that school, not just their own student
 - that seminars or workshops for supervising teachers be held at school level to discuss criteria and standards for evaluation of student teachers
 - that the final assessment be made in conjunction with the lecturer, supervising teacher, school co-ordinator and, in the case of third-year students, a school moderator.
- (d) Regarding diagnostic feedback, it was recommended:
 - that teaching practices in the second year be graded to assist in providing students with a "picture" of progress in the third year
 - that students be formally provided with both oral and written diagnostic feedback periodically throughout the practice
 - that, to improve the effectiveness of their feedback, supervision lecturers work in one or two co-operating schools in order to become more aware of the needs of students, teachers and pupils.
- (e) In regard to peer evaluation of students' teaching, some groups were uncertain as to the likely success of this, but a few endorsed the idea, recommending:
 - that peer evaluation be undertaken as part of college microteaching
 - that opportunities should be increased for students to observe each other's teaching and to later discuss their observations and share thoughts on teaching
 - that, if peer evaluation is to be used, the students be carefully matched in ability.
- (f) In addition to responding to the listed questions, it was also recommended:
 - that the overwhelming pressure of assessment be reduced by (a) awarding, instead of a grade, a final result of "ready to teach" or "not ready to teach" plus a profile of the student teacher's strengths for the employing authority, and (b) placing students in co-operative teaching situations with chosen fellow-students and groups of teachers.

Issue 6: Student experiences within schools

It was recommended:

- that model or demonstration lessons be conducted where student teachers are able to co-operatively evaluate the sessions and suggest ways in which the teaching could be improved

- . that, in order to increase students' opportunities for such involvement, the criteria for the selection of supervising teachers include the teacher's involvement in extra-curricular and community activities
- . that supervising teachers be given training in liaising with parents and interacting with the community
- . that opportunities for student involvement be increased through, for example, part-day school visits, visits to other schools and facilities, and one-week visits to schools at the beginning of the school year
- . that students be given the opportunity to see a variety of schools and pupils: this would require monitoring of their practice school placements over the three years of the course, and organising visits and special courses.
- . that there be regular weekly contact with the student's practice class before and after the block practice
- . that block practice sessions be scheduled at various times of the year
- . that final-year students be adopted by a practice supervisor and maintain a relationship through the year.

DISCUSSION OF ISSUES ARISING OUT OF GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

Professor Betty Watts

I am not able, in the time available, to bring all the recommendations together in any sensible order. What I have done, rather than that, is to select six issues that seem to me to cut across the six topics that were discussed. Each of the issues transcends any individual topic. I propose to make a couple of comments on each issue and then invite comments from each of the centres.

The six issues which I want to discuss are time, communication, corporate action, professionalism, system recognition and valuing, and school experience and continuous development.

Time

Time was probably the most frequently written word in all the summaries. People emphasised the need, for example, for time for a student to liaise with his or her practising school before commencing school experience, time for all groups involved in the practicum to have contact and consultation, time for lecturers and supervising teachers to talk to students, time for lecturers to talk to teachers, time for teachers to talk with co-ordinators and so on. Feedback to students was seen as highly significant but time-demanding. Time was necessary for joint planning, which was seen as very important by the groups. It was recommended that lecturers should spend time in schools getting to know them; time was needed for internal school meetings and cross-school meetings. Perhaps the central point on time was time for the supervisory teachers. A variety of suggestions was raised, with the most frequent one being that supervising teachers be released from other extra-curricular activities. That is, supervision should be part of the recognised group of non-classroom roles so that if the supervisory teacher was going to take on that task then he or she should be freed from other extra-curricular activities.

Only one group raised the potential problem of how the rest of the staff would feel. Supervisory teachers are already paid and under this proposal they would not have to perform some of what might be regarded as the more commonplace activities. Staff morale is therefore a very real issue. If being appointed as a supervising teacher is a recognition of excellence, then probably there needs to be recognition of excellence in a diversity of other fields.

Comments on Professor Watts' remarks

Rockhampton: As it was felt that there should be more supervision at the local level, the notion of establishing school-based committees was discussed by all of the groups. It was acknowledged that the establishment of these committees would take time.

Townsville: Comment was made on the proposal of increasing the supervision time available to supervising teachers by removing them from routine tasks. A Townsville participant considered that student teachers should experience these tasks and that if supervising teachers were released from such duties then student teachers would be missing out on an important part of their practicum.

The time which tertiary institutions allocated to their visiting lecturers was seen as crucial.

Toowoomba: It was felt that each of the time issues was really a resource issue which needed to be solved co-operatively between the Department of Education and staff at colleges planning together to see what time could be made available to everyone.

Brisbane: Comment was made on the idea of supervising teachers not being paid. It was remarked that this would be fine provided that there was recognition in some other way of their role in teacher education.

Communication

Communication, including communication between students and all others and between schools and tertiary institutions, was emphasised a great deal in the group reports, but I did not pick up many concrete suggestions about what the pre-conditions for effective communication were and how these might be met. In earlier discussions which I sat in on concerning the relationship between tertiary institutions and schools, the question of status had been there at least implicitly. The research report touched on this at times, but not in full detail. What perceptions do teachers really have of the lecturers and what perceptions do the lecturers really have of the schools? These perceptions may not only impede communication between the school and the tertiary institutions but they may also influence negatively the attitude of the student teacher either to the practical experience or to "all that theory" at college.

Comments

Brisbane: It was suggested that if college staff members were attached to particular schools on a regular basis, including both before and after the practicum as well as during it, and also served as resource people in these schools, then there would be sustained lines of communication which might overcome many of the problems. The lecturer would then have an opportunity to convince the school that he or she had a valuable contribution to make.

Toowoomba: In Toowoomba, it was considered that the methods of communication were quite adequate. These included lecturers visiting schools, practice teaching booklets and the use of various Boards. It was felt that a reawakening and rediscovery of the existing forms of communication was needed, rather than implementing new forms.

Townsville: The system of a school team with an institutional member and the forming of links with schools through lecturers designated as moderators was strongly supported by Townsville participants.

Rockhampton: It was seen as very important that the opportunity be provided for school supervisors and lecturers to have some form of in-service program on a regular basis, so that, through these face-to-face talks, lecturers and teachers were aware of what was happening in each other's institution. In each reasonably large school, it was considered that supervising teachers and school co-ordinators should meet before, during and after the practicum and that meetings should also be held with the college co-ordinator.

It was felt that liaison with schools should be the main task of the college co-ordinator and not a minor task fitted in to suit his or her lecturing timetable.

Corporate action

The third thread which I saw running through the group reports was the notion of corporate action. It seems to me that the corporate notion was exemplified in suggestions and recommendations about committees within schools and their membership. Does that pose more difficulties for secondary schools than primary, or fewer difficulties for secondary schools because of their organisation? There would be committees which would function across schools, maybe to moderate, but to do more than moderate. I wondered if there were any lessons to be learned from the Board of Secondary School Studies procedures and if any procedures had proved more effective or less effective.

There was an attractive emphasis in one of the reports that captured the ideas expressed in many of the reports, which said that we should move towards a "unity of concept", i.e. agreement among all those involved in the practicum as to its aims and their role in school experience; that is the notion of something corporate which is larger than the individual tertiary institution and certainly larger than the individual school.

The issue should have a different implementation in Brisbane from what it would have in Toowoomba, Townsville and Rockhampton, just in terms of the geographic size of Brisbane and the fact that the tertiary institutions are less bounded by their immediate area for the location of students.

Comments

Toowoomba: There was strong support for teachers and co-ordinators within schools being involved in all aspects of planning; those aspects included major reviews for reaccreditation purposes, and also minor reviews during the periods between reaccreditations.

The Toowoomba group also supported the view that in the practicum the role of the co-operating teacher was gradually emerging as one with more responsibility than has been the pattern in the past. They argued that role specification must be clear when groups worked together.

Brisbane: In the context of preparation of college staff and supervising teachers, it was argued that the school committee was an important structure as a means of "unifying concept" and ensuring that all parties involved - teachers, co-ordinators, visiting lecturers and student teachers - were aware of the objectives of the program, preparation requirements and the activities that would be involved. A team approach could thus be developed and school experience would be seen as a process that was a vital part of student preparation, both for the school and for the college.

In Brisbane, it was considered difficult to achieve a representative sample of students to serve on such committees given that there might be three teacher education institutions with students at the one school. Moreover, there were many different types of students with regard, for example, to year level of course and type of course undertaken (e.g. arts/humanities or physical education). It was suggested that the issue of each school accepting students from three institutions might need to be reconsidered.

Rockhampton: Communicating to students that meetings had been arranged and getting students to attend meetings were identified as problems. The idea of making associate teachers more familiar with college programs and providing for their involvement in various ways at the institute was seen as desirable. For instance, supervising teachers could be released from schools and brought to the institute so that they could become more familiar with its programs and could contribute their expert knowledge to the preparation of student teachers.

Townsville: It was argued that, as student teachers were the clients of supervision, it was short-sighted not to include them in the process of analysing the practicum. At present, it was difficult to get enough student teachers to represent the student body and sufficient supervising teachers, but these problems might be overcome if school-based groups could be formed. The school-based groups could consider professional training for supervisors, examine ways of encouraging teachers to become supervisors and carry out an analysis of the practicum after each block practice. Difficulties were foreseen in forming school-based committees in practising schools in Mackay and Cairns.

Brisbane: The point was made that if students were to be included on committees, then their views must be taken seriously. The issue of the status given to students' membership on the committee when final decisions were made

also needed to be considered. Top down decisions were often made whilst a pretence only was made of taking notice of students' point of view.

Professor Watts argued that the practicum would not be advanced if recommendations that could be implemented in substance but not in spirit were made. Any recommendations should be based on very careful scrutiny of possible constraints and impediments as well as those aspects that might facilitate their implementation, and then as the systems changed and innovations were introduced, the innovations would be likely to work because all aspects had been clearly thought through.

Dr Eltis suggested that while it was important to gain feedback from students while they were in the program, there was also a need to consider how to obtain feedback from ex-students when they took up an appointment.

He also noted that in Sydney some years ago, because any number of tertiary institutions could approach a school to supervise student teachers, there were some schools with more student teachers than members of staff. This led to a rationalisation so that no school could normally be used by more than two institutions. Communication problems were diminished and continuity of contact between schools and tertiary institutions was established. There was a problem in the early stages because some schools which had been associated with a particular institution for a long time regretted having their contact discontinued. The real problem was that schools did not have a choice about which institutions they were to be associated with: this could have been negotiated better.

Representatives of each of the tertiary institutions commented on the extent to which they obtained feedback from former students.

The type and amount of feedback obtained from ex-students varied from institution to institution. Institutions normally asked graduates to complete questionnaires in connection with the five-yearly reviews of courses, while some institutions surveyed their graduates more frequently. One institution had recently completed a major three- or four-year study on recent graduates and student teachers, while a study to gain feedback from recent graduates in rural centres on how they were adapting to their role was also being planned. One college reported conducting interviews with recent graduates in the schools. Representatives of all tertiary institutions reported obtaining feedback from graduates through their involvement in post-graduate studies. In one college, students were involved on course design committees and a school liaison committee which followed the implementation of the courses in schools had been established. An alumni for graduates had been founded by one institution which hoped to gain informal feedback at an annual dinner. One college was considering establishing a system for finding out, from school inspectors, how their recent graduates were performing, and attempting to relate any problems to their school experience or college subjects.

A recent graduate commented that she and her friends had not received any contact requesting feedback. It was commented that should the opportunity arise, they would be most happy to contribute. She felt that she had much to contribute and that the course could be improved if recent graduates were given an opportunity to feed their ideas back into the course.

A second recent graduate commented that in the surveys of first-year teachers, the right kinds of questions were not asked to allow teachers to give the kinds of responses they wanted to give. More value was seen in meetings and conferences where first-year teachers could give their views on how useful college and practice teaching had been.

Professionalism

Professionalism seemed to be emphasised in almost all the groups, and linked with that,

the recognition of professionalism. There seemed to be universal endorsement of the notion that would-be supervisory teachers do need training and indeed one group said supervisory teachers of many years' standing needed in-service education as changes were implemented throughout the system. There was the notion that lecturers are not necessarily automatically equipped with the knowledge of how to work constructively and effectively in the collaborative exercise and that they therefore need training. Some of the groups who considered the selection, preparation and role of supervising teachers recognised that one wanted good people to put themselves forward as supervisors. One was looking for a motive, one group said, of altruism. The role of helping to perpetuate the profession can be equally well called altruism or concern for the well-being of the profession.

A couple of the groups endorsed the concept of a master teacher. One of the groups had the vision of the master teacher being a supervisory teacher who was excellent in that role and for some years occupied the position of master teacher. If that were to happen, there would need to be system recognition of that position. Professionalism in terms of a system job was raised: creating promotional positions for supervisory teachers so that a move through the ranks to deputy principal or principal or even subject master or mistress might require experience in the supervisory role. Other ideas raised in group reports which were concerned with professionalism were the notion that the supervisory teacher should be given greater professional autonomy, the critical role of the school co-ordinator, and the recognition of supervisory teachers as associate lecturers. When I was on the National Inquiry into Teacher Education we had enormous difficulty with that, because some people saw the term associate lecturers as "putting the teacher down".

It seemed to me a very healthy emphasis on professionalism when people argued for the commitment of all concerned in relation to meeting the goals of the practicum and indeed of the teacher education program as a whole.

Another idea that was touched on by a number of groups concerned the need to improve the quality of the time spent by various people in the supervising process. Some groups, for example, wondered whether the quality of a lecturer's contribution to the teacher education program would be best assured by minimising his role with students in the school and maximising his role with staff in the school. I think a number of groups must have been touching on various ideas to increase the quality of the time spent in the practicum.

There was also an emphasis on professionalism in those groups which considered student self-evaluation. I am not sure that I would say it was professionalism if we endorsed the notion of peer student evaluation.

So there was a whole exciting emphasis on professionalism and if all those ideas could come into practice, then I think we would be well launched on making the practicum occupy a central role (but not a dominant role), its proper role, so that everything bears upon what will happen ultimately in the schools.

Comments

Townsville: It was considered that the status of the supervisory or co-operating teacher in the school and also the lecturer who spends time in the school needed to be high. To enhance the status of supervision in the university or college, it was suggested that more weight be given to the supervisory role as a criterion for promotion. In the schools, the idea of accrediting supervising teachers was considered. However, difficulties were seen with this. For instance, there would be questions of who does the accrediting and the issue of teachers who would make excellent supervisors, but were teaching in schools which do not take student teachers.

The increased number of student teachers created a difficulty in improving the status and professionalism of supervisors. While, on the one hand, it was

desirable to be selective and improve the professional status of supervising teachers, on the other hand, schools were being asked to take more student teachers.

It was noted by Professor Watts that some of the groups recommended the number of students associated with each practising school should be reduced. If one were to endorse that idea, one would have to determine how to overcome the potential constraints of the distance between the school and the tertiary institution in order to ensure an effective practicum.

Rockhampton: A Rockhampton participant commented that it was important for supervising teachers to be professional and accept their role as teachers of student teachers, which was a different role from the one of teaching children.

It was commented here by Professor Watts that nomenclature was a way of encapsulating conceptions of roles, and that it might be a useful exercise for the Board to think about the question of nomenclature.

Rockhampton: One group in Rockhampton argued that there could be very professional reasons why teachers did not want to be supervising teachers. The group considered it legitimate that teachers would not want to supervise because of the interruption caused to their own class. It was also remarked that the same teachers were being asked to be supervisors every year and these teachers needed a break to upgrade their own professional expertise.

Professor Watts commented that all good teachers might not want to be supervisory teachers and that all good teachers might not be good supervisory teachers. If one was a good teacher, one was not necessarily able to analyse the process of teaching and communicate it to other people. She considered that it was time to try to spell out the various types of excellence that we need in schools and in tertiary institutions. A good teacher or a good lecturer would not necessarily be good in all of the roles these positions entail.

Toowoomba: Comment was made on the notion of master teachers. The role was seen not as simply a role for supervisory teachers, but one which might embrace a number of other areas such as running in-service programs within the school. It was suggested that one could become a master teacher through a number of routes, but one of those routes might be to have been a supervisory teacher for a number of years, so that the position of supervisory teacher would be seen as a step along the road to becoming a master teacher. It would not be the only step but one of the important ones.

Brisbane: It was stated by a lecturer that supervision of practice teaching was given a low weighting when lecturers were appointed to the college. The question of how to improve the supervisory skills of lecturers who were weaker in this area was raised as a problem, as when workshops were held, the committed and enthusiastic participated.

Dr Eltis commented that, from his experience, those in promotional positions or administrative positions were often not very good supervisors for a variety of reasons, one of which was that they did not have the time; another might be that they had difficulty exercising counselling skills with young students coming to the school. What had been tried overseas, particularly in Britain, was a notion of a person who would fulfil a "triple I" role, the "I" standing for initial training, induction and in-service. The role, where it has been tried on a "triple I" basis, had tended to be too difficult. The role was modified so that teachers with seven or eight years' teaching experience, but not necessarily in a promotion position, were given responsibility for initial training and induction, and another teacher who worked closely with the first person looked at school-focused in-service needs and the development of programs.

Systematic planning

Systematic planning - not only systematic planning for the whole of the practicum across however many years it is going to occupy in a student teacher's life, but also much better systematic planning from the beginning of the teacher education program through to at least the induction stage, if not the in-service, is the next issue I want to raise. What might we do next to get better systematic planning so that the practicum itself is sequential and organised, and its place in the total teacher education program is also systematic and sequenced?

Comments

Brisbane: A young teacher commented that it was not until she had been teaching that she realised how much she needed her college work. This teacher suggested that there needed to be some kind of experience before students began college or after six months of college, and then a return to college after quite a large amount of teaching experience.

This was linked by one Brisbane participant to the qualities of a good student teacher. It was felt that the in-school committees, consisting of lecturers, teachers, student teachers, possibly community members and inspectors, should carry out a selection process of those Year 12 students from the school who wished to become trainee teachers rather than relying solely on the TE Score. This was seen as adding to the prestige of the committee in the school as well as providing a better selection process.

Professor Watts argued that the TE Score was an important but not sufficient criterion for choosing a teacher, and that there were other desired qualities of teachers, apart from high academic performance. If, however, schools were to counsel Year 12 students, there might be a danger of perpetuating the model, so that teachers would select Year 12 students who mirrored themselves. A small proportion might therefore be selected by the committee, but the rest might be selected using the TE Score.

Toowoomba: It was felt that there would be advantages in having secondary school students try some sort of practicum before they made the decision to come into primary teacher education, as secondary schools may be inherently different from primary schools and therefore potential student teachers may not have an adequate view of what would be required for teaching in the primary school.

Rockhampton: The Rockhampton participants were not in favour of any screening at the end of Year 12.

Townsville: It was proposed that the numbers of students who were unsuitable for teaching and caused problems in the school during their practicum were fairly small, and that, if screening was introduced, some who would make very good teachers would be excluded. It was argued that if teacher education could train teachers, then screening was inappropriate. Further, there was no obligation on the employer to hire the people who completed pre-service courses, so that there was a safeguard in the final decision of the system not to employ unsuitable people.

System recognition and valuing

System recognition and valuing of the integral role of schools in the pre-service preparation of teachers and institutional recognition and valuing of the role of lecturing staff in pre-service preparation was emphasised by a number of groups. One of the groups in fact suggested that future research should consider how to increase the status of the supervisory teacher. That has implications for system recognition and valuing, and making available staffing ratios that will allow schools to do all the things they want to do, and providing adequate back-up resources.

Comments

Townsville: The point was made that the Department of Education should be persuaded to implement a system of regularly seconding good supervising teachers from the schools into tertiary institutions for two or three years, and that these teachers should then get some recognition for the work that they do at the tertiary level because they would be taking their ideas back into the school system. This would be a two-way educative process, both for the people in the tertiary institutions and for the teachers in the schools that those teachers return to.

Rockhampton: It was reported that if the staff of the institute was more involved in a particular school then that would help teachers to recognise that school experience was valued and the teachers would want to become involved more with the training of teachers.

Toowoomba: It was stated that the industrial issues should be considered; it was not just personal commitment that was involved, but also a larger system commitment.

Brisbane: A participant considered that there should be more qualitative research on supervision which would add to the status, particularly for the college and university staff, of practice teaching and have tertiary staff much more committed and involved. It would also add to the status of teachers as they recognised the problems and what they were doing with it. The Board of Teacher Education might therefore consider undertaking some qualitative research as a follow-up to their project.

Concluding remarks

I find it very difficult to understand how we can achieve all these goals that we would like the practicum to achieve when we do not really seem irrevocably to have committed ourselves to a notion of the continuing professional development of teachers. I rather feel that there should be quite explicit recognition of a pre-service phase which meets certain limited goals, and therefore school experience in the pre-service stage would also have limited goals to achieve, and then an induction period. If we need sequence in the practicum, we certainly need sequence in in-service. I wonder if we are not in danger of asking the school practicum to achieve too much. I wonder if the students, even by third year, are in a position where they can capitalise on this smorgasbord of opportunities we want to offer them in the practicum. So I would hope that, as the Board and as individual researchers continue their studies, some consideration might be given to looking at the school practicum and determining whether some goals are more appropriate to the school practicum, and some goals more appropriate later in the teachers' professional lives. At the moment, I think we have become so enthusiastic about what the practicum might achieve that we are trying to send out from the pre-service stage the fully qualified teacher.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOARD OF TEACHER EDUCATION

Having examined the research report and conference proceedings, the Board of Teacher Education believes that a number of conclusions and recommendations can be drawn which might enhance the effectiveness of school experience in teacher education programs.

A review of the Board's school experience project is being undertaken by a team of external researchers. The purpose of the review is to provide to the Board information about the value of the Board's research to those involved in pre-service teacher education programs and to suggest ways in which the Board can, through its future research activities, help to identify and support desirable developments in teacher education programs in Queensland.

The Board believes that both the research results and the conference outcomes provide strong endorsement for the basic recommendations concerning teaching practice made in the 1978 Review of Teacher Education in Queensland (the Bassett Report). These were:

- . Practice teaching should occupy a central position in the diploma course, and all professional studies should be functionally related to it.
- . Effort should be directed towards increasing practice teaching efficiency by more effective supervision of student teachers.
- . There should be close contact between tertiary institutions and schools, both to ensure that the objectives of the student teachers' course are understood by the schools, and to allow a better understanding of school policies and practices.

The Bassett Committee's recommendations were embodied in the Guidelines for the Future Development of Teacher Education Courses and Awards in Queensland Colleges in the following form:

11. *School experience should occupy a central position in pre-service courses and all professional studies should be functionally related to it. In general, school experience of no fewer than ninety days in a three-year diploma of teaching course and no fewer than fifty days in a pre-service graduate diploma course is considered desirable. The total school experience should include a substantial block practice teaching period during the final year of the course.*
12. *Pre-service teacher education should be a co-operative enterprise between each college and the schools with which it is associated in its school experience program. Colleges and schools should take positive steps to ensure that teachers in associated schools are able to share fully in the development and implementation of teacher education programs.*

The Board is pleased to note the developments which have taken place in recent years in the relationships between teacher education institutions and the schools with which they work. The Board believes, however, that continued efforts must be made to find ways of achieving more fully the potential benefits of close collaboration in the planning and implementation of teacher education programs. Most of the recommendations set out below may be seen as reflections of this underlying need.

At the organisational level, a number of different structures already exist and a number of further suggestions were put forward during the conference. These may be summarised in the following two recommendations:

Recommendation 1

- (a) That school experience committees established by tertiary institutions include supervising teachers and student teachers as well as tertiary staff.
- (b) That these committees be given significant responsibility in the development of policy for school experience including the design, implementation and evaluation of the school experience curriculum together with the determination of objectives, structures and procedures for the practicum.

Recommendation 2

That consideration should be given to the establishment of a school experience committee within each co-operating school.

These school-based committees would include supervising teachers, the school co-ordinator of practice teaching, student teachers and tertiary staff and would be responsible for developing school policy on school experience within the guidelines established by the institution's school experience committee and for providing support for supervising teachers and students.

It has often been stated that the quality of supervision experienced by student teachers is the most important influence on the quality of their school experience. Clearly, the influence of supervising teachers on the quality of supervision is critical. It is therefore important to encourage as many good teachers as possible to become supervisors, to select the most appropriate supervisors from those available, to ensure that both tertiary staff and supervising teachers employ a systematic approach to supervision with an appropriate supervisory style which emphasises indirectness, and to foster, among tertiary staff and supervising teachers, commitment to helping student teachers and to the teacher education program.

Recommendation 3

That tertiary institutions conduct workshops and seminars for tertiary staff and supervising teachers which aim to develop a mutually agreed systematic approach to supervision and to foster an appropriate supervisory style.

Recommendation 4

That tertiary institutions consider the possibility of offering units on supervision within in-service Bachelor of Education programs and of making these units available also on an informal or continuing education basis.

The research showed that student teachers valued the role of supervising lecturers in the practicum, but that they considered that the amount of time which lecturers were able to spend with each student teacher during school experience was completely inadequate. Given the present lecturer : student ratio, it seems unlikely that lecturers would be able to spend enough time in schools to meet the ideal espoused by student teachers. There is nonetheless action which could be taken to improve the effectiveness of the time which lecturers spend during periods of school experience. The most radical of these actions which tertiary institutions could undertake would be a re-consideration of the role of supervising lecturers. With well-prepared and committed supervising teachers, tertiary staff might be able to take a less direct role in observing and assessing student teachers, except perhaps in cases where students were experiencing difficulties or were in danger of failing, and rather devote their energies to preparing students for school experience, conducting follow-up activities with students after school experience, training supervising teachers and liaising with co-operating schools.

Recommendation 5

- (a) That tertiary institutions examine the role of supervising lecturers with a view to determining if their time might not be more effectively spent in pre- and post-practicum activities with student teachers, in working with supervising teachers and in liaising with co-operating schools.
- (b) That tertiary institutions endeavour to ensure that all staff members involved in school experience fully understand their role and that they receive the support required to allow them to carry out their role effectively.

An important consideration in enabling staff members to carry out their role is the amount of time which they can spend in school experience and associated activities. It must be recognised by institutions that tertiary staff associated with pre-service teacher education programs are required to make a contribution to the program which may go significantly beyond that expected by staff in other programs which do not require lecturer involvement in field-based activities. The Board therefore recommends:

Recommendation 6

That, in determining staffing levels for teacher education, tertiary institutions make due allowance for the time which lecturers are required to spend in duties associated with school experience.

The amount of time which lecturers are able to spend in school experience might also be increased if tertiary institutions were able to arrange timetables and meetings at the college in such a way as to minimise the interruptions caused to lecturers while they were involved in school experience. To minimise interruptions to lecturers' school experience time, the Board recommends:

Recommendation 7

- a. That tertiary institutions make every effort to arrange campus commitments for staff involved in school experience in such a way that the interruptions caused to this involvement are minimised.

The commitment of lecturers to school experience will be enhanced if they perceive that school experience is recognised and valued by their institution. The recommendations made above will no doubt enhance the status of school experience. The status of school experience will be further enhanced if tertiary institutions encourage lecturers to extend their involvement with schools beyond periods of practice teaching. Lecturers could, for example teach in schools, work with teachers in solving problems teachers were experiencing, or help with school-based curriculum development. The Board therefore recommends:

Recommendation 8

That tertiary institutions encourage each lecturer to form a long-term working relationship with a small number of schools.

Recommendation 9

That tertiary institutions encourage lecturers to spend periods of professional leave teaching in schools.

Lecturers working within schools can provide a valuable resource for schools and at the same time enhance their own professional development and so ultimately provide a better preparation for student teachers. It is also true that teachers can be a valuable resource to be used in lecturing and tutoring student teachers on campus. Teachers

should also find the opportunity to work in a tertiary institution a refreshing and invigorating form of professional development.

Recommendation 10

- (a) That tertiary institutions and employing authorities confer to discuss the possibility of exchanges of staff between institutions and schools.
- (b) That employing authorities allow more teachers to be released for secondment to tertiary institutions.
- (c) That tertiary institutions be encouraged to make more use of seconded teachers to teach pre-service teacher education students.

In order to ensure that the practicum is meaningful and relevant to student teachers, tertiary institutions need to develop a practicum curriculum designed to link theoretical considerations to practical tasks undertaken with pupils in the school by student teachers. The practicum curriculum should consist of a carefully graduated and sequenced set of activities based on present and prospective teacher roles. With well-designed pre-practicum studies and post-practicum follow-up activities in the tertiary institution, professional studies and school experience will be more readily related to each other, and school experience will have a central place in the pre-service program. The Board therefore recommends:

Recommendation 11

That through their school experience committees and program advisory committees, tertiary institutions examine the professional studies component of pre-service teacher education courses to ensure that they form a carefully sequenced set of graduated activities designed to enhance and illuminate student teachers' experience in schools.

While the immediate responsibility for the conduct of school experience programs clearly rests with the teacher education institutions and their associated schools, the Board believes that the policies and practices adopted by school authorities should also recognise the critical role which school experience plays in the pre-service preparation of teachers.

A number of the recommendations and suggestions which might be made to employing authorities have resource implications. The Board nevertheless believes that it is in the long-term interests of employing authorities to provide more support for school experience as this will lead to more thoroughly prepared teachers and hence to an improvement in the quality of education provided to pupils.

Both the conference and the research highlighted the time pressures which supervising teachers and co-operating schools are under.

The Board believes that one of the most effective ways of achieving immediate improvements in school experience for student teachers would be to provide more time for supervising teachers to devote to their supervisory tasks, particularly to their discussions with the student teachers under their care and with the lecturing staff of the teacher education institution involved. The Board therefore recommends:

Recommendation 12

That school authorities give serious consideration to recognising the special needs of co-operating schools by such means as:

- (a) adopting more favourable staffing formulae for schools involved in teacher education programs so that supervising teachers would have adequate time to fulfil all of the responsibilities associated with their role;

- (b) providing staff on a temporary basis to co-operating schools to enable supervising teachers to attend meetings or seminars at the tertiary institution or in the school;
- (c) creating a promotional position of school experience co-ordinator, at subject master/mistress level, in schools in which a specified minimum number of student teachers per year undertake school experience.

The Board also notes a number of suggestions which have emerged relating to the possibility of providing greater recognition to the role and status of supervising teachers both as a means of encouraging more teachers to participate in this important professional task and as an acknowledgement of the significant contribution experience in supervision makes to a teacher's professional development.

Recommendation 13

That employing authorities consider giving recognition to the role and status of supervising teachers by such means as:

- (a) providing additional salary increments for teachers who have served as supervisors over a specified number of years;
- (b) taking into account teachers' contribution to the development of student teachers in the course of their appraisal for promotional purposes.

Of all the recommendations concerning school experience to emerge from the research project, the seminars and the conference, the one which was most strongly expressed by all groups of respondents was that student teachers should spend more time in the schools.

In its consideration of this strongly expressed need, the Board has noted the lack of research evidence concerning the optimum time for school experience. This concern apart, the Board recognises that the amount of school experience which can be provided is at present totally circumscribed by the funding provided to the tertiary institutions on the one hand and by the industrial agreement relating to practice teaching on the other. Under these constraints there appears to be no way in which the amount of school experience for student teachers can be increased; indeed, with the pressures for increased practice teaching allowances and the erosion of tertiary funding levels it will be extremely difficult to avoid further reductions. The Board therefore recommends:

Recommendation 14

That the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission and the Commonwealth Government be urged to make adequate provision for school experience in pre-service teacher education courses in tertiary institutions.

Recommendation 15

That, in future negotiations concerning the practice teaching industrial agreement, consideration be given to ways in which any additional time made available for supervision through more favourable staffing arrangements may be used to increase the number of days of school experience as well as providing some additional time within each day for tasks associated with supervision.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

PARTICIPANTS IN SCHOOL EXPERIENCE CONFERENCE

Brisbane

Mr K. Albion, Brisbane College of Advanced Education
Miss J. Allara, Student, McAuley College
Miss K. Anderson, Musgrave Hill State School
Mr G. Atwell, McDowall State School
Ms R. Bamkin, Queensland Teachers Union
Dr R. Barrett, Newmarket State High School
Mr D. Bird, Strathpine State School
Miss N. Blackmore, Mount Alvernia College
Miss L. Brulhart, Surfers Paradise State School
Mr J. Burton, Macgregor State School
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Ms V. Cafferky, Woodridge North State School
Sr A. Carter, McAuley College
Miss J. Casey, Student, McAuley College
Mrs J. Clark, Student, Brisbane College of Advanced Education
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Mr J. Dooley, Brisbane College of Advanced Education
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Mr G. Duck, Board of Teacher Education
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Mr J. Fien, Brisbane College of Advanced Education
Ms S. Finney, Art Section, Department of Education
Dr P. Galbraith, University of Queensland
Mrs B. Galtos, Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens Associations
Mr E. Gerhke, Inspector of Schools
Mr B. Gordon, Regional Education Officer, Catholic Education Office
Mrs L. Hais, Chatswood Hills State School
Dr W. Hall, Brisbane College of Advanced Education, and Chairman, Research Committee, Board of Teacher Education
Mr W. Hamilton, Board of Advanced Education
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Dr R. Hardingham, McAuley College
Dr D. Hawke, Brisbane College of Advanced Education
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Mrs J. Kean, Brisbane College of Advanced Education
Mr J. Lange, Brisbane College of Advanced Education
Mr J. Lennon, Brisbane College of Advanced Education
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Dr R. Lundin, Brisbane College of Advanced Education
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Dr H. Martin, Brisbane College of Advanced Education

Dr P. Meere, McAuley College
 Mrs P. Mitchell, Isolated Children's Parents' Association
 Mr R. Muller, Brisbane College of Advanced Education
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 Sr P. Nolan, McAuley College
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 Mr W. Pleash, Brassall State School
 Ms S. Radford, Harrisfields State School
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 Mr D. Rostedt, Macgregor State High School
 Mrs M. Shanks, Kedron State High School
 Mr B. Smith, Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education
 Mr K. Smith, James Cook University of North Queensland
 Mr R. Smith, McDowall State School
 Mr G. Streets, Brisbane College of Advanced Education
 Mr H. Sutcliffe, Ascot State School
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 Mrs M. Swindell, Brisbane College of Advanced Education
 Miss A. Tanner, Board of Advanced Education
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Toowoomba

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 Mr L. Bird, Allentown State School
 Mr L. Bird, Lakes Creek State School

Mr R. Cogill, Allenstown State School
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Townsville

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 Mrs R. Hooper, James Cook University of North Queensland
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 Mr P. Lucas, St Joseph's School
 Ms P. Lythgo, St Mary's School
 Mr A.R. MacKee, James Cook University of North Queensland
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 Mrs F. Saunders, Hermit Park State School
 Mr N. Sellars, James Cook University of North Queensland

APPENDIX 2

MEMBERSHIP OF RESEARCH COMMITTEE, BOARD OF TEACHER EDUCATION

- Dr W.C. Hall,
Principal, Mount Gravatt Campus, Brisbane College of Advanced Education (Chairman
March-December 1984)
- Dr G.A. Jones,
Principal, Carseldine Campus, Brisbane College of Advanced Education (Chairman
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- Mr M.T.A. Byrne,
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- Professor W.J. Campbell,
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- Mr N.H. Fry,
Executive Officer, Board of Teacher Education
- Mr A.R. Johnson,
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- Rev. Sister Patricia Nolan,
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- Dr D.A. Price,
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- Mrs M. Rosser,
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- Mr G.J. Duck,
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